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Statement by the President of the Security Council

At the 4278th meeting of the Security Council, held on 20 February 2001, in connection with the Council's consideration of the item entitled "Peace-building: towards a comprehensive approach", the President of the Security Council made the following statement on behalf of the Council:

"The Security Council recalls the open debate held at its 4274th meeting on 5 February 2001 on 'Peace-building: towards a comprehensive approach'. The Council recalls also the statements of its President in relation to activities of the United Nations in preventive diplomacy, peacemaking, peacekeeping and post-conflict peace-building. The Security Council welcomes the convening by the Secretary-General of the Fourth High-level United Nations-Regional Organizations Meeting and notes with interest its results, in particular the 'Framework for cooperation in peace-building' as conveyed by the Secretary-General to the President of the Security Council in his letter of 12 February 2001 (S/2001/138).

"The Security Council reaffirms its primary responsibility under the Charter of the United Nations for the maintenance of international peace and security. The Council emphasizes the need for full respect for the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and the relevant provisions of international law, in particular those related to prevention of armed conflicts and settlement of disputes by peaceful means.

"The Security Council reaffirms that the quest for peace requires a comprehensive, concerted and determined approach that addresses the root causes of conflicts, including their economic and social dimensions.

"The Security Council recognizes that peacemaking, peacekeeping and peace-building are often closely interrelated. The Council stresses that this interrelationship requires a comprehensive approach in order to preserve the results achieved and prevent the recurrence of conflicts. To this effect, the Council reiterates the value of including, as appropriate, peace-building elements in the mandates of peacekeeping operations.

"The Security Council recognizes that peace-building is aimed at preventing the outbreak, the recurrence or continuation of armed conflict and therefore encompasses a wide range of political, developmental, humanitarian and human rights programmes and mechanisms. This requires short and long-term actions tailored to address the particular needs of societies sliding into

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conflict or emerging from it. These actions should focus on fostering sustainable institutions and processes in areas such as sustainable development, the eradication of poverty and inequalities, transparent and accountable governance, the promotion of democracy, respect for human rights and the rule of law and the promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence.

"The Security Council further reaffirms that a comprehensive and integrated strategy in peace-building must involve all the relevant actors in this field, taking into account the unique circumstances of each conflict situation. The Council emphasizes that a well-planned and coordinated peace-building strategy can play a significant role in conflict prevention. In this connection, the Council underlines that international efforts in peace-building must complement and not supplant the essential role of the country concerned.

"The Security Council notes that the experiences of the United Nations and regional organizations and other actors in peace-building point to the need for enhancing peace-building activities by formulating a strategy based on the interdependence between sustainable peace, security and development in all its dimensions.

"The Security Council stresses that, to be successful, such a peace-building strategy should meet, inter alia, the following basic criteria: relevance, coherence and consistency of programmes and actions; the consent and cooperation of the authorities of the State concerned where they exist; continuity in and conclusion of the process; cooperation and coordination among organizations and other actors involved; and cost-effectiveness of the overall peace-building operation.

"The Security Council strongly encourages the United Nations system and regional and subregional organizations, donor countries and the international financial institutions to consider undertaking initiatives such as: utilization of the mechanism of consolidated appeals, the joint holding of pledging conferences to mobilize expeditiously international political support and the essential resource requirements; ensuring prompt financing of quick start-up peace-building projects; and strengthening mechanisms that promote development and self-reliance by improving capacity-building activities.

"The Security Council also underlines that successful peace-building is predicated on an effective and an unambiguous division of labour, based on the comparative advantage of different implementing bodies, between all the international partners, including the United Nations system, the international financial institutions, regional and subregional organizations, non-governmental organizations and the wider international community. In this regard, the Council strongly encourages all those actors to enhance their cooperation in areas such as the early identification of situations where peace-building is required; the definition of objectives and priority areas of peace-building; the development of an integrated operational response through mutual consultation; joint monitoring of peace-building activities; and establishing repertories of best practices and lessons learned in the area of peace-building.

"The Security Council stresses the importance of mainstreaming a gender perspective into peace agreements and peace-building strategies and of involving women in all peace-building measures.

"The Security Council further encourages the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations to establish consultative processes to ensure that peace settlements and agreements mediated by these organizations include commitments by the parties to the conflict to concerted action in different areas of peace-building, and stresses the need to identify such areas at early stages of the negotiation of peace agreements.

"The Security Council recognizes that the repatriation and resettlement of refugees and internally displaced persons as well as the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of ex-combatants should not be seen in isolation but must be carried out in the context of a broader search for peace, stability and development, with special emphasis on the revival of economic activities and reparation of the social fabric.

"The Security Council considers it essential to provide speedy operational solutions to the exceptional and urgent needs of countries emerging from or on the verge of conflict, through innovative and flexible means, including quick impact programmes which translate into concrete and visible improvements in the daily lives of their local populations.

"To enhance further the effectiveness of the United Nations in addressing conflicts at all stages, from prevention to settlement to post-conflict peace-building, the Security Council reiterates its willingness to consider ways to improve its cooperation with other United Nations bodies and organs directly concerned by peace-building, in particular the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council which have a primary role in this field.

"The Security Council recalls the essential role of the Secretary-General in peace-building, in particular in the establishment of strategies in this field and their implementation and recognizes the need to strengthen the coordination and analysis capacity of the Secretariat in order to allow the Secretary-General to fulfil his responsibilities in this area.

"The Security Council recognizes the need for the early involvement on the ground of peace-building actors and an orderly assumption of their responsibilities. To this effect and in order to avoid any gap between peacekeeping and peace-building, the Council expresses its determination, where appropriate, to consult at various stages of any peacekeeping operation that includes peace-building elements and in particular when the operation is being established, with the State concerned and with relevant actors who are primarily responsible for coordinating and implementing aspects of peace-building activities, such as the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council, the United Nations funds and programmes, the international financial institutions, regional organizations and major donor countries.

"The Security Council recognizes that troop-contributing countries may be involved in peace-building activities and that, within the existing system of consultations with these countries, relevant peace-building activities should be discussed.

"The Security Council encourages close cooperation between the authorities of the State concerned and the international community in elaborating programmes of peace-building activities where the commitment by the parties could be formalized in written communications.

"The Security Council underlines the importance of the presence of special representatives of the Secretary-General or other suitable United Nations coordination arrangements, such as the resident coordinator system, in coordinating the elaboration and implementation of peace-building programmes by international organizations and donor countries in close cooperation with local authorities, taking into account ongoing activities. The Council stresses that any United Nations peace-building presence should have the necessary personnel and financial resources to discharge its mandate.

"The Security Council stresses the importance of its being kept regularly informed of the progress achieved as well as of difficulties encountered in peace-building in countries where a peacekeeping operation had been mandated by the Security Council.

"The Security Council reiterates that efforts to ensure lasting solutions to conflicts and to maintain the momentum for peace in any given country or region require an increased solidarity, sustained political will and timely and adequate resources on the part of the international community.

"The Security Council recalls the decision by the Secretary-General to instruct the Executive Committee on Peace and Security to formulate a plan on the strengthening of the United Nations capacity to develop peace-building strategies and to implement programmes in support of them, and looks forward to the submission by him of recommendations to the Security Council and the General Assembly on the basis of this plan.

"The Security Council will remain seized of the matter."